

## **FC279.23 District Councillor Report**

Cllr Bunty Waters report to Parish Council December 2023

I wish you all a very happy and joyful Christmas and a peaceful New Year for us all.

### **Bar Hill Gyrotory**

I met with MP Anthony Browne and two officers from National Highways last week, as I, together with residents, am very frustrated with no action being taken to correct the ramps that cause serious problems as you drive over the bridge. We urged them to communicate with the village as to any actions that they might be taking, and were assured that they will do that. So we just wait and see!!  
These are comments from Anthony Browne:

*I know from conversations with Councillor Bunty Waters how frustrated residents of Bar Hill have been by the issues with the gyratory - the junction between Bar Hill, Longstanton, and the A14.*

*As a regular visitor to Bar Hill, I entirely understand the impact of the defects on the approach ramps leading onto the roundabout and across the junction. The 'RAMP' signs just don't cut it! So last Friday, Bunty and I convened a meeting in Bar Hill with officials from National Highways to urge them to find a solution.*

*I was assured that the County Council is looking to find a short-term fix on the surface level while National Highways continues to investigate the underlying structural issues. I have urged them to communicate better with the residents in the future about steps they are taking to address the problem.*

### **Christmas Holiday Activities and Food Programme**

Cambridgeshire County Council are once again running a Christmas Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) programme, funded by the Department for Education. Children in receipt of benefits-related free school meals can access a holiday scheme for up to 16 hours over the Christmas period. Participating schemes are offering enriching experiences, a daily meal and physical activity eligible children and young people. Recently arrived refugee families are also eligible to book as well as families struggling financially. Full details are on the County Council website. We are supporting this by sharing the County Council's messages on social media and a poster is attached if you are able to help spread the word in your wards. Thank you.

### **Package of almost £400,000 to help residents through the cost of living crisis**

A wide range of support worth almost £400,000 is being put into place by South Cambridgeshire District Council after a cost of living crisis package was agreed.

At a Cabinet meeting on Monday 14 November Councillors agreed to offer additional support measures, especially to people who are most vulnerable, after hearing how the rising cost of energy and food bills is having a major impact on individuals, families, and businesses across the district.

A total of £180,000 has been put towards support measures from the District Council and a further £211,000 will come from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System (ICS). The ICS are providing this funding to ensure support is co-ordinated effectively and directed at those in need locally.

In addition, the Council is working closely with various local partners to ensure residents know where to go for advice and help.

### **Council reminds renters to seek help on mould issues at their homes**

People in South Cambridgeshire, who rent homes in the private sector, are being urged to seek help from the Council if mould issues are not resolved by their landlords. The reminder follows the tragic case of Awaab Ishak, a two-year-old boy who died following chronic exposure to mould at the family home in Rochdale.

In South Cambridgeshire, the District Council has a role in ensuring that homes in the private sector and the Council's own properties do not contain health hazards.

Most properties within the private rented sector in the district are in good condition, but the Council's Environmental Health team investigate any complaints.

Private Sector and Housing Association tenants can make a complaint about the condition of their home by emailing [env.health@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:env.health@scambs.gov.uk)

The following information is required:

Their address: The Landlord's details: What the issue is: How long it has been a problem: Any Photos available to show the extent of the issue.

The Council has the power to take the appropriate enforcement action if there are issues that need to be resolved. This action could include writing to the landlord to ensure the issue is resolved, but the Council can also serve a legal notice to instruct works to be carried out.

The Council manages around 5,500 Council homes. Leading councillors have said that the Council takes reports of mould seriously and does not assume that damp is a consequence of the lifestyle of tenants. Officers support people on the issue by:

- Actively informing residents about methods to reduce damp and mould
- Using specialist contractors to assess and remedy any issues reported
- Encouraging all operatives to check for damp and mould when they are working in properties as part of safeguarding and welfare procedures
- When any repair is reported, the Council asks tenants if there are other issues at their home

The Council had already planned to carry out a stock condition survey on all Council-owned homes next year which will identify any issues with mould, or risk of mould developing to ensure proactive action can be taken.

### **Support for Ukraine: It all starts with a spare room**

A major campaign has been launched to appeal for more hosts in South Cambridgeshire and the city of Cambridge to [\*\*support families from Ukraine.\*\*](#)

So far under the Homes for Ukraine programme, around 740 people from Ukraine have arrived in South Cambridgeshire, with approximately 400 more in Cambridge. The Homes for Ukraine scheme allows UK residents to sign-up to host guests, often women and children, who have fled the war in Ukraine.

Between the two areas, a total of almost 500 hosts have already been providing housing to guests. However, with the war in Ukraine continuing, and with it not being safe for many families to return, there is an ongoing demand to provide them with a safe place to stay.

Under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, hosts sign up to provide a home to guests for a minimum of six months. However, around 20% of current hosts are not able to continue past that initial six-month point. So, the guests who have been staying with them would benefit from alternative accommodation locally, so that they can continue to build on the relationships and community connections they have already been able to make.

South Cambridgeshire District and Cambridge City Councils have therefore launched a joint campaign to recruit extra hosts. Anyone who can offer a spare room and warm welcome is being asked to text ROOM to 88802 so that the councils can support them through the process and match hosts to guests who have already started to settle in the local area.

Please contact me if you have any questions or I can help in any way. Please let me know if you haven't received your SCDC Magazine with lots of information.

[bunty.waters@ntlworld.com](mailto:bunty.waters@ntlworld.com)

07734 690580